



Mid-South Arctic Blast - Bundle Up!

January 6, 2015



The National Weather Service in Memphis is predicting an Arctic blast for the Mid-South by mid-week with bitterly cold temperatures, between 10 to 15 degrees, and a wind chill index near zero. Citizens who are most vulnerable during freezing temperatures include our seniors, those with diabetes or thyroid disease, infants, outdoor workers, and those without adequate heat. Learn the terms of cold weather medical emergencies and when to seek medical help.

Wind chill: A formula that combines outdoor temperatures and the wind - how cold it feels. Wind chill is dangerous for humans and animals. If the temperature is 15 degrees F and the wind is at 10 miles per hour, the wind chill index is minus 7. Factor the wind chill index into your preparedness efforts and outdoor activities.

Hypothermia: Occurs when the body's core temperature drops below 95 degrees due to loss of heat. Symptoms: confusion, fatigue, shivering, drowsiness, slurred speech, numbness, shallow breathing, or a slow pulse.

Frostbite: Occurs when the body is exposed to freezing temperatures, mostly affecting the nose, cheeks, ears, fingers, and toes. Symptoms: burning, numbness, tingling, itching, loss of sensation, swelling, blood-filled blisters, and white or yellowish waxy skin. Skin may become purplish blue, become hard, and may become blackened and dead. Rewarming may be painful.

First aid for hypothermia and frostbite: Get victims out of the cold. Remove wet clothes. Warm the body slowly. Wrap the body in a blanket. Give warm fluids if the victim is consciousness. Do not rub affected areas, use skin-to-skin contact. **Seek medical advice!**

Other safety tips for freezing temperatures:

- Dress in light layers, an overcoat, mittens, scarf, boots, and a hat.
- Limit your time outdoors.
- Bring the pets indoors and have a shelter available for livestock.
- Wrap outdoor pipes and faucets. Let indoor faucets drip with cabinet doors opened.
- Libraries and community centers are a good resource for those needing to warm up.
- Stay informed with a NOAA all-hazards radio and an ALERT FM.
- Be a buddy and check on your neighbors!

For more information about winter weather safety, please visit: www.staysafeshelby.us, www.ready.gov, and www.weather.gov.